

## **Life is (for the most part) Going Great by GreenLily474**

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**Summary:** Shortly after finishing their undergraduate degrees; Mike, Will, and Eleven return to Hawkins for Jonathan and Nancy's wedding and experience several (mostly fluffy) moments.

## Life is (for the most part) Going Great

### Three Days Before the Wedding

"Okay, 65 is a seriously depressing stretch of highway," said Mike to his girlfriend as he pulled onto the state route that lead to Hawkins. Eleven laughed as she thumbed through her psychology notes. She was starting grad school in the fall and her brother's borderline obsessive compulsive academic over preparing had rubbed off on her after all those years. "No wonder Will feel asleep," Mike continued as he glanced in the rear view window at his best friend sleeping in the back seat.

The trio had all finished their undergraduate degrees at Northwestern three weeks earlier. They had seen *Jurassic Park* three times since then and planned on seeing it with their friends when they got back to Hawkins for Jonathan and Nancy's wedding. Eleven (who, to the world was known as Jane Hopper, but was simply known as El or Ellie to her family and friends who knew that she was actually the twin sister of Will Byers) had decided to become a therapist. Mike and Will were following through with their plans to create comics and design video games together. They had all gotten summer internships in Chicago and split the rent on an apartment.

For Mike, it was a dream situation. His room mates were the two people he cared about the most in the world: the guy who had been his best friend since they were five years old and the girl he'd found when his best friend went missing; a girl with whom he's fallen quite hard.

Will yawned in the back seat and blinked as the sunlight hit his face and he put up his hand to block it. "Did you have a good snooze, sleepy head?" asked Eleven.

"Great snooze," said Will dryly as he sat up and messaged his neck. "Are we almost there?" He looked around and saw the familiar landmarks of his childhood. They entered Hawkins and drove to the Byers-Hopper household.

Joyce lifted the curtains and felt a surge of joy as she saw the kids

(22 year old recent college graduates) pulling in and she rushed out to meet them. Eleven greeted her first with a tight embrace. Every time they hugged, they were making up for lost time as Eleven had spent the first twelve years of her life in a lab. Will got out of the car and leaned on it patiently folding his arms and smiling at his mother and sister.

Eleven looked up and saw Hopper standing on the front porch, with her old dog Buttons at his side. She released her mother so Joyce could hug Will (who, every time she hugged, she was making up for almost losing him several times).

Eleven embraced Hopper. "Is Sara coming?"

"Yes, she'll be at the wedding," said Hopper. "I'm sure she'll be happy to see you again."

Seven years earlier, Jim Hopper had discovered that his daughter Sara was still alive and had been kidnapped by a private company that was involved in the MKUltra experiments. Eleven had helped Sara through her trauma and reconciled her with Hopper. This experience had made Eleven decide to become a therapist. Nancy had asked Sara if she'd wanted to be a bridesmaid, but Sara had said no, simply because she never had a chance to get to know Nancy or Jonathan very well as they were in college by the time Hopper made contact. Sara lived with her mother in Indianapolis when she was ready to join society again.

"Hey mom, how's it going?" asked Will as Joyce pulled him into a hug.

"My kids are all in town, so it's going pretty great," said Joyce. "Hey Mike!" she said as she hugged Mike.

"Hey Mrs. Byers-I mean Hopper, sorry old habits," said Mike.

"It's okay, Mike, you can call me Joyce if you want," said Joyce.

"Not sure I can get used to that either," said Mike with a grin.

"Is Jonathan with the Wheelers?" asked Will. He was always eager to see his big brother.

"Yes, and we're meeting them for dinner in a couple of hours," said Joyce.

"Why don't you guys come inside and get freshened up, it's a nice place we're going to," said Hopper as he came down to help with the suitcases. "Hey, buddy," he said as he pulled Will into a half hug.

When they got inside, Joyce took Eleven upstairs to go over some bridesmaid duties with her. Nancy has chosen Eleven, her younger sister Holly and a friend from NYU named Melissa as bridesmaids.

"Can I talk to you two for a moment," Hopper asked Will and Mike as he pulled out a couple of cans of root beer from the refrigerator and handed it to them.

"Is everything okay?" asked Will.

"Everything's fine, there's just something you should know: Lonnie found out about the wedding," said Hopper.

"He's not coming, is he?" asked Will.

"We don't know. We haven't heard from him," said Hopper.

"Jonathan's making good money doing something that Lonnie always said was a waste of time and now he wants to play the role of the caring father who always believed in his son," said Will with a scowl. Jonathan had become a celebrated photographer in New York. There were calendars and books of his work. Will proudly told everyone that his brother was the greatest photographer on the planet.

"Dammit," said Mike. "This is all my dad's fault. He should have let them have the wedding in New York like they wanted!"

Something occurred to Will. "He's not getting anywhere near El!" Mike's eyes widened in horror.

"He won't know who she really is," said Hopper. "But you're right, he's not getting anywhere near her. I'll make sure of that." Will bit his lip and Hopper gave his adoptive son's shoulder a reassuring squeeze. "Hey, do you think I'd let anything happen to my little girl?" Will shook his head. "Correct, I wouldn't. We're a family with a lot of

secrets, so we have to be careful. If Lonnie comes to the wedding, we'll let him put on the show of being the caring father. If he tries anything other than that, I'll take care of you. You just focus on your best man duties. Have you finished your speech?"

"Aw shit, I knew I was forgetting something," said Will.

"Very funny," said Hopper. "Can I see it?"

"Sure," said Will. He pulled a small stack of index cards out of his pocket and handed it to Hopper.

Party: Two Days Before the Wedding

"STEVE!" Dustin shouted over the noise at the old tavern as Steve entered with Kim.

"Hey, shithead, how's it going?" he asked as he gave Dustin a hug.

"Great," said Dustin as his arm was draped around Cathy. Max and Lucas stood with them. "Can you two keep a secret?"

"Yeah, sure," said Steve.

"We don't want to steal Nancy and Jonathan's thunder, but we're getting married in October!" said Dustin. Cathy pulled out her necklace with the engagement ring.

"Hey, that's great, congrats," said Steve. "When are you two tying the knot?" he asked Max and Lucas.

"As soon as I finish grad school," said Lucas. "M.I.T. is rough."

"You guys should move to Florida," said Dustin. "Steve and I are nice and warm during the winter while the rest of you idiots are freezing your asses off up north."

"We may be moving to Florida or Houston if Lucas gets that job at NASA," said Max. "I mean *when* he gets it."

"Did I hear you talking about getting a job at NASA?" asked Mike as he approached the group. Will, Eleven, Jonathan, Nancy and a couple

other people were with them.

"Hey, it's the happy couple!" said Dustin.

"Hey guys," said Jonathan. "Everyone, this is Alex and Melissa. They're mine and Nancy's friends from New York and they're in the wedding party. Alex, Melissa: meet Dustin, Lucas, Cathy, and Max. They're Will, Mike, and Ellie's childhood friends. And this is Steve and his fiance Kim. Steve is a friend of ours from high school."

"Nice to meet all of you," said Melissa.

"You guys sure you're ok with me being here?" Steve mutter to Nancy and Jonathan.

"Of course, we are," said Nancy. "We're happy you could make it."

"Yeah," said Jonathan. "We didn't want to have the wedding here, but since it ended up being here anyway, I for one, am glad to have one of the few people here I could stand."

"Well, you got out of this crappy town," said Steve. "We both did." He held of his glass.

"I'll drink to that," said Jonathan as he clinked glasses with Steve.

"Are you bringing a date to the wedding, Will?" asked Dustin.

"No," said Will nonchalantly.

"Why not?"

"Because I'm not currently seeing anyone and I didn't want to bring a stranger to my brother's wedding."

"I heard the Masons are coming," said Lucas.

"Julie and I are just friends now," said Will. "We went to different schools in different states."

"Yeah, but I'm pretty sure if Julie comes to the wedding, it'll be to see you," said Lucas. "Besides, more and more people are using the world

wide web. It's changing things."

"How about letting it change the subject," said Will as he sipped his screwdriver.

"Who wants to see *Jurassic Park* tomorrow?" asked Mike.

### The Night Before the Wedding

Jonathan, Will and Eleven climbed out onto the roof of their house to enjoy the beautiful June night. Mike and Nancy were staying with their parents the night before the wedding.

"Our lives are all going pretty good right now, huh? Jonathan asked his younger brother and sister.

"It is," said Will. "Who would have thought."

"I just hope Dad doesn't show up tomorrow," said Jonathan.

"I can make him wet himself," said Eleven.

"El!" said Jonathan as he tried to sound reprimanding, but ended up laughing. "Only as a last resort."

"He's getting old," said Eleven,

"That excuse might make a good cover," said Will. "Hopper said he'll take care of it if Lonnie tries anything."

### The Wedding Day

Lonnie showed up to the wedding with a woman who are around the age of his children. He managed to behave himself and play the role of the model father during the ceremony, but things changed when the speeches happened at the reception.

Will talked about Jonathan always being there for him as they grew up and introducing him to music. He talked about Jonathan being the greatest brother anyone could have-and the greatest role model. As he gave his speech, he saw his mother crying tears of joy as she sat with Hopper, Sara and Mr. and Mrs Wheeler at one of the tables. He

briefly made eye contact with his ex-girlfriend Julie Mason and saw some other familiar faces like Jennifer and Tim, his decathlon teammates and his old friend Randy. He avoided looking in Lonnie's direction during the speech.

When Will was done with his speech, Nancy's friend Melissa gave a speech. Joyce and Karen ended up giving speeches as well. Then Mr. Wheeler gave a disconnected clueless speech and finally Hopper gave a touching speech about how proud he was of the man Jonathan had become.

"Who the hell do you think you are, Jim Hopper?" Lonnie shouted drunkenly. Will stood up angrily, but Hopper held up his hand.

"Lonnie, you're drunk. Sit down," said Hopper.

"I'm the kid's father, don't I get to give a speech?" Lonnie slurred. "I tried to teach my sons how to be men and they never had any gratitude. They just wanted to follow their pansy hobbies like little bitches!"

Will clutched angrily at the table cloth and exchanged an angry glance with Jonathan. What gratitude did they owe Lonnie?

Most of the party guests gasped in horror. "That's enough! You need to leave!" said Hopper.

"Leave my own son's wedding?" asked Lonnie loudly. His beer suddenly started to foam excessively and spill all over him. "SON OF A BITCH!" Mike and Will looked over and saw that Eleven was holding a napkin up to her nose.

"Alright, Mr. Byers," said officer Callahan. "Let's take you somewhere to cool off." He and another man grabbed Lonnie's arms and led him out of the room.

"We don't need to let him ruin Nancy and Jonathan's day," said Will to the people in the room. The wedding guest applauded. Mike led the others in beginning the pound their fists on the table. "That could have been a lot worse." He muttered to Will.

After the father-daughter and mother-son dances, the DJ played a



slow song and several couples took to the floor. "Ready, El?" asked Mike.

"Yes, I sort of know how to dance now," said Eleven with a smile.

"You two are at least as good as everyone else in Hawkins," said Will. Mike and Eleven walked to the dance floor.

"You look beautiful," Mike whispered to Eleven as they danced next to Jonathan and Nancy.

Will got up from the table and leaned against a pillar as he watched the couples on the dance floor.

"Hey Zombie boy," said Julie as she broke Will out of his reverie. "Do you wanna dance?"

"Should I stutter and mumble before I say yes?" asked Will.

"I seems like I always have to make the first move," Julie teased.

"Hey, I was gonna ask you, but you didn't give me enough time," said Will with sarcastic indignation.

"Yeah, you really looked like you were going to ask me while you were leaning against that pillar," Julie chuckled as she took Will's hand. "C'mon!"

"On one condition," said Will. "We go to the opposite end of the floor as them. I don't feel like dealing with their ... giggling," Will nodded to the place where Dustin and Lucas were dancing with Cathy and Max.

"Deal," said Julie. They went to dance near Mike, Eleven, Jonathan and Nancy,

The reception was being held in the gymnasium of Hawkins High School since the banquet hall had a power outage. It had ended up working out very nicely.

"I think they still have a couple of our award winning homecoming floats in storage," said Julie as the reception was starting to wind

down later that night. Mike and Will had taken off their ties and blazers and untucked their shirts. Eleven had let down her hair.

"They'd better," said Will. "Those things are legend."

"Want to go see them?"

"I-um maybe," said Will as he glanced at Jonathan.

"Go ahead, Buddy," said Jonathan. "Nancy and I are about to go change anyway."

"Alright, let's go," said Will as he offered his arm to Julie.

"How about we get some fresh air?" Mike asked Eleven.

"Sounds good," said Eleven. They walked hand in hand out to the old track field figuring that Dustin or Lucas had already claimed the baseball field. They laid down on the ground and Eleven put her head on Mike's chest as they enjoyed the summer night.

"I don't miss this town at all," said Mike as he kissed Eleven on the forehead. "But this is pretty nice."

"I don't miss this town either," said Eleven. "We knew some nice people here and our parents are here, but all the nice people we went to school with have left town."

"True," said Mike.

"Your mom asked me when we're getting married," said Eleven.

"Sorry about that," said Mike. "She bugged me about that too."

"I'm not in a hurry," said Eleven. "I like our life, but I still love you."

"I love you too," said Mike as he caressed her hair. "And I like our life."

The truth was they liked having Will with them as they felt they could keep an eye on him and protect him if he was under the same roof. It was a habit they'd never really grown out of. They knew he'd

probably find a place of his own, not wanting to intrude, if and when they got married. There was that and the fact that they hadn't figured out how to deal with any children they had that turned out to have super powers. There was the possibility that any children Nancy and Jonathan had would be super powered as well.

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"I can't believe they actually kept this all these years," said Julie as she lifted the cover on the float they'd designed senior year.

"I guess the theater department made good use of it," said Will. He sat down on the couch and leaned tilted his head back on the the cushion. "I really can't believe they still have this old couch." Julie sat down beside him.

"You really think they'd get anything new for the theater department in this town?" she asked. Will laughed and shook his head. Julie reached over and messed up his hair the way she'd done countless times in their high school years. She started caressing his forehead with her thumb. He leaned in to kiss her, but stopped inches from her face unsure if she even wanted him to do so. Julie moved her hand to his cheek and he leaned the rest of the way in pressing his lips to hers. After a minute, she slowly pulled back.

"I know you're going back to Chicago and I'm going back to Cincinnati (Julie had joined the Cincinnati orchestra a few weeks earlier) soon, but can we pretend that we didn't go to different colleges and break up for a few minutes."

"That's becoming a pattern with us.." said Will.

"I know," said Julie.

"Why stop now?"

"I see no reason."

Julie lifted up Will's shirt, exposing his abdomen. She ran her fingers across the old scare from where the blushing bride herself had burned him with a hot poker to stop him from strangling his mother when he was possessed by the Mind Flayer nearly nine years earlier.

Julie tenderly kissed the scar. Will closed his eyes and Julie's lips were back on his in seconds. He wrapped his arms around her and pulled her closer.

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"Where are Will and El?" asked Joyce as she looked around anxiously. She had never lost the habit of worrying about them.

"They'll be back soon, Mom, don't worry, they just went for walks....Look, there they are," said Jonathan as Nancy held his hand. Will appeared to be saying goodbye to Julie. Mr. Mason shook his hand and Mrs. Mason gave him a half hug then waved to Eleven and Mike. Joyce waved to them and they headed over.

"Are you two about to head out?" asked Will.

"Yeah, we're worn out," said Nancy.

"Other than losing the venue and a certain unwanted guest showing up, thing went pretty great today," said Jonathan. "Just promise that when you two tie the knot," said Jonathan to Mike and Eleven-both blushed. "You'll have the wedding in whichever city you want."

"That's a promise," said Mike.

"Hey, guys, D&D campaign tomorrow?" said Dustin as he and Lucas walked past the group with Max and Cathy.

"D&D campaign tomorrow," said Will as he gave them the thumbs up. Joyce smiled and pulled him into a hug. Life was (for the most part) going great.